Children of heroes to benefit from Hero Thrill Show

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STEPHANIE FARR / DAILY NEWS STAFF Colby Cassidy, with her mother, Judy, received a college scholarship from Hero Thrill Show Inc. after her father, a cop, was killed.

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COLBY CASSIDY remembers her father, Philadelphia Police Officer Chuck Cassidy, working "22 out of 24 hours a day for years" so she and her siblings didn't have to worry about paying for their college tuition.

"He wanted to pay for it, and we were lucky," she said. "He was a very hard worker and instilled a lot of that in us."

Cassidy, now 25, was a sophomore at Gwynedd-Mercy College on Oct. 31, 2007, when a robber fatally shot her hardworking father while he was on duty.

"We had a lot of stress immediately in the middle of college and it was pretty scary," she said. "On top of just losing your dad, you have all these other things in the back of your mind that you don't want to worry about."

It was the Hero Thrill Show Inc. that made sure she didn't have to worry. The organization stepped up to pay Cassidy's and

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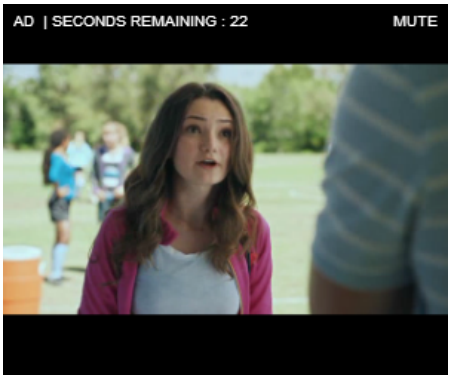

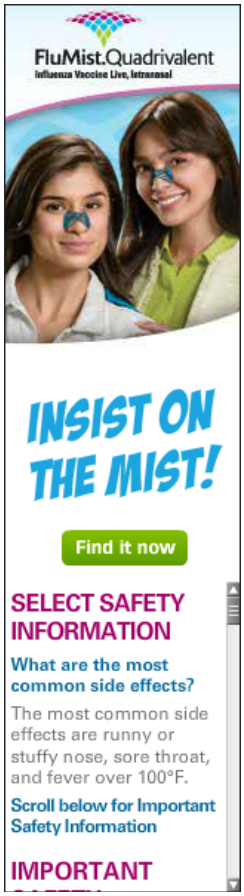

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her siblings' college tuition.

The officer's widow, Judy Cassidy, said the scholarships were important in their time of need.

"When this comes along and they tell you you don't have to worry about that, it's a huge help," Judy Cassidy said.

Both women attended a kickoff pep rally for the 2013 Hero Thrill Show yesterday on Market Street between 18th and 19th. The rally, which included stunts from the Police Department's Highway Patrol Motorcycle Drill Team, was a precursor to the main event on Sept. 21 at Wells Fargo Center.

Through the annual stunt show, Hero Thrill Show Inc. has raised more than $2 million since 2006. The money helps the children of fallen and injured first responders from Philadelphia to pay for college. Currently, 17 students enrolled in college benefit from the program, said the organization's president, Jimmy Binns.

Fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers said that at $10 a pop, Hero Thrill Show tickets are a bargain.

"But the real bargain you get is from the spirit of the police and firefighters who go out there every day and work for you," Ayers said.

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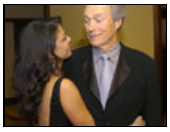
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